

At a court of Oyer and terminer held for the county of Southampton the
the 11th day of February 1802 for the trial of Hercules a negro man
slave belonging to James Wilkins on of the county afores^d charged with
murdering William Summrell within the county afores^d on the
forenoon of the first day of this instant

Present Benjamin Blunt Jacob Darden jr
Robt Goodwyn Jos. Ruffin
Josiah Vick Saml Blunt
James Millar George Gualdy jr
M^r Lees Gentlemen

The court being thus constituted the prisoner was set to the bar
by the Sheriff of this county (and Aug^r C Coker being appointed
council for the deft) and charged with the murder aforesaid to
which he plead not guilty and Anthony Newcom a free mulatto
boy an apprentice to James Wilkins on ^{being first charged & sworn} about 17 years of
age of prompt mind, was examined on behalf of the Commonwealth
says that he was ordered by W^m Summrell his overseer to be at the river
an hour before day on the morning before Summrells body was found he
went accordingly on horseback and saw there Aaron and another black person
with him Aaron asked this witness what he came for he replied he came for
the overseer who was over the river and had bought a horse for him which he
had ordered him before Aaron then said go home immediately say y^e horse
had thrown you and got away then this witness went a little way and
stopped and the person who was with Aaron spoke to him & desired him to go
home at that time he knew that the person who spoke to him was
Hercules the prisoner by his voice. Hercules was then running off the
witness asked Hercules what he was about ~~he replied he was going~~
~~about~~ he replied he was going to do something the reason of this
witness stopping was that he suspected ^{that} something was to be done as he
had heard among the negroes of the family that they wished Summrell
dead. after this the witness proceeded home & heard a gun after he had
got about 3/4 of a mile towards the place where he had left the
prisoner & Aaron in the direction of where he had left the prisoner.

And William
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who would
shoot ^{him} and
for it - the
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Aaron and for
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year he had
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then their
& Big Ant
that George
summed up
the poison
weeks before